



EPISODE 829

Do THIS at Night To Get Deeper Sleep & Transform Your Body

With Lewis Howes

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SHAWN STEVENSON: What is sleep? How does it work? What happens during sleep? How does what I eat or drink affect my sleep? How does my sleep quality impact my appearance and attractiveness? What are things that I can do starting tonight to improve my sleep quality? You're about to discover the answer to all of these questions and much more on this powerful episode today. This episode was actually inspired by an experience that I had this past weekend. I was so fortunate to be able to take my family, my wife and my two sons to an epic event put together by my friend, And Lewis is a New York Times bestselling author and has one of the top podcasts in the United States. And he has a live event called the Summit of Greatness. And last minute he invited us out, he sent us some tickets. For my family and I to come and I happen to not have a basketball tournament for my youngest son this weekend, and so it all fit. And I felt like this would be a really great reset for our family because we've been dealing with a lot of challenges past year.

The loss of my father, about a year ago, bookended by the loss of my wife's father about a year later. And in between my oldest son moving out, my youngest son changing schools, and a whole host of other challenges and turbulence. But, a lot of times we forget that in order for us to fly, we're going to experience some turbulence during liftoff. And so just being able to have a moment to reset and to go to something empowering as a family was just what the doctor ordered. And he had an incredible lineup of speakers, including a guest from the model health show, Dr. Joe Dispenza. And he also had other speakers like New York times bestselling author, Rory Vaden, like David Goggins, like Cody Sanchez, a great person in the finance space.

And he also had incredible performers like number one hit artist, Rachel Patton. And there was a little inside story because Rachel Patton and she has a, if you haven't heard of her, you might have definitely heard her song fight song. It's been in a ton of movies, just the background for a lot of really motivational things, and she's actually Louis's neighbor. And Louis and I were training not too long ago at his house and we were walking out going to my car and, this woman was walking across the street and he says Hey, they start talking, catching up and he was like, do you know that it is? And I was like, no, who is that? He's that's Rachel Patton. And then he reminded me of a few of her songs. And I was like, of course I've heard of her. And so they had their little inside jokes there at the event that they were neighbors. And I actually witnessed this neighborly connection, which was really cool. There's all these little synchronicities that I was a part of and just adding to the magic of the event.

And also another guest of the model health show in Q performed, and they had Harry Mack, this incredible freestyle artist. He just put together such an eclectic group of individuals, but

most importantly, it was the people. It's the energy of the people who decided to come to something, to be empowered, to be educated, and that's something very special. And I want you to keep an eye out because we got some things planned coming up here. And I just want to reiterate how important it is for us to get out of the our box to get out of our day to day routine. And also to get off of the screens and to be around other human beings. There's something magical that's unlocked when we spend time together. And so, all of that to say, there was a lot of laughter, there was a lot of tears, and most importantly, there was a lot of empowerment.

And this sparked the idea that Lewis and I had an incredible conversation when I first moved to LA. So this was a couple of years ago, but we had an incredible conversation. He invited me over to talk about some new insights on sleep wellness. And as sleep deprivation is one of the most chronic issues that much of our society is struggling with today. And actually a lot of positive change has been happening recently. And I'm grateful to say that I was even a small part of that because my first book, Sleep Smarter was the first sleep wellness related book to become an international bestseller. And I wrote that book somewhere around 2013. And a lot of change has happened in this time period.

I'm very grateful to say that. But There's so many things that people simply don't know about or we need reminders about. And so this conversation from my appearance on the School of Greatness is absolutely packed with powerful insights, tips, tools, strategies. And even just, again, starting with what is sleep? How does it work? And so these are essential things for any of us to know about because this is something that all humans do. And we're going to even talk about why do we do it? This might've been something that we would have evolved out of because our senses are being dulled and we're more vulnerable when we are sleeping.

And so would this be something that leans towards safety in evolution? And so we're going to talk about. Why this is something that we still need and we actually need more than ever? So I think you're absolutely going to love this conversation. Now this powerful episode is brought to you by my incredible friends at beekeepers naturals. And specifically what I utilized today was their amazing nootropic called brain fuel. And its primary ingredient is based on a study published in advanced biomedical research finding that royal jelly has the potential to improve spatial learning attention and memory.

In addition, the researchers found that royal jelly has powerful antimicrobial anti tumor and anti inflammatory properties. So royal jelly is the primary ingredient, but it also has Bacopa. And a randomized double blind placebo controlled human trial published in 2016 found that after just six weeks of use, BACOPA significantly improved speed of visual information processing, learning rate, memory consolidation, and even decreased anxiety in study participants. Brain fuel is that deal, go over to beekeepersnaturals.com/model-and-you

going to get 20 percent off brain fuel and their other incredible sustainably harvested bee products like their super fruit honey, like their incredible propolis immune spray. They're all third party tested. For over 70 pesticide residues that are common in other bee products. And again, you get 20 percent off storewide when you go to [beekeepersnaturals.com/model](https://www.beekeepersnaturals.com/model). That's B E E K E E P E R S [Naturals.com/model](https://www.beekeepersnaturals.com/model) for 20 percent off store wide. And now let's get to the Apple podcast review of the week.

ITUNES REVIEW: Another five star review titled "The Goat of Health and Nutrition Info" by FitNerd22. Shawn's show is seriously one of the highlights of my week. He always has the top experts in the field of health, nutrition, mindset, and so many awesome conversations here in this library. His books are great treasures of information. Eat Smarter Cookbook is phenomenal. I'm so glad that I discovered his show and refer back to it for important information often so I can share with my clients. Can't forget the shoutouts to some of my favorite music artists too. Keep doing the thing, Shawn. People are listening.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh, I love that so much. The GOAT. And that's a great segue into this incredible episode because this show is all about greatness. And this is an episode that I did on the School of Greatness again, interviewed by my good friend, new York Times bestselling author, Lewis Howes. So buckle in for an absolute masterclass on sleep wellness. Now, let's dive into this special interview that I did on the School of Greatness.

LEWIS HOWES: So for those that don't know Shawn, you are the expert on sleep and more than sleep now, but you were known for sleep. You've got a book about sleep. But you're just an amazing researcher on the body and on human performance and on nutrition, food, training, sleep. And you're doing more on the emotions and everything on how we can perform better as human beings. Would I say that's about accurate?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Absolutely. Yeah, man.

LEWIS HOWES: And you just moved to LA. So welcome.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. You've been to LA for years, man, to come out here.

LEWIS HOWES: We have some stuff in common where I lived in St. Louis for six years. You grew up there.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Born and raised in St. Louis.

LEWIS HOWES: I still have 314. There you go, myself.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Me too.

LEWIS HOWES: Do you? So I still held that. That's been like a 20 years having that cell phone number since 1999. And we're here, man, you've done some amazing things. You've got a book on audible. It's one of the top books Sleep Smarter on audible. That's that helps so many people sleep better. And I thought it'd be perfect going into a new year and new decade to figure out, you How can we sleep better? What are the main keys for sleeping better moving forward? We talked about this on four years ago. What's the same and what's updated on how we can sleep better?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, man, the thing for everybody to understand, I think it always starts with us asking the right question. And a lot of us sleep has become, it's just exploded. And I'm so grateful that I was there to thrust this new movement and sleep wellness.

LEWIS HOWES: Now there's even so many apps that are podcasts that are just storytelling to go to sleep. Yeah. Calm has this series, which is just sleep stories. I think it's called to help people go to sleep because it's so hard for us.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. And we, now we know.

LEWIS HOWES: But why is it so hard to go to sleep?

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's just the environment that we live in today, and it's looking again at the question. So what is sleep actually? Yeah. We have to start there.

LEWIS HOWES: What is it?

SHAWN STEVENSON: So this is this thing we're chasing after, we're trying to get more of it, we know it's important. But, sleep is really, first of all, it's very strange. If you look at some of the characteristics from the outside, it's like you're unconscious, you know what I mean?

LEWIS HOWES: You lay there for hours.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You're not really moving. Your senses are dulled and gone down. Obviously your visual senses are reduced or just none unless you're weird and you have your eyes open. Your, even your auditory, your sense of smell, your sense of touch, all those things reduce. But what's different from that and like a coma is that is that it's easily, you can come out of it if somebody nudges you enough or, you have something that goes.

LEWIS HOWES: It's a light coma.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. It's like a little mini hibernation. You're like a baby bear for a minute, but what we see in the inside and this is what's so cool now is that we can track and we can study the brain to see what happens. We know you're sleeping based on changes that happen in your brain waves. And so right now we're in a kind of normal waking state of beta frequency in our brain waves. Maybe a little gamma if we get to Bruce Banner, amped up a little bit, but from our normal waking state of beta, we shift into alpha. It's just a slower pattern. And alpha is really aligned with what we would refer to as getting in a flow state, right? It's just a calm, relaxed state of presence. And we naturally transition into that state when we're getting close to sleep. This one, a lot of creativity can manifest.

LEWIS HOWES: So when we're getting ready for sleep, we get into alpha.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. It's why it's said it's very good to when you first wake up, cause you, you go in reverse when you wake up, to, focus on your day, your goals for the day. Because, okay, so we move from beta to alpha and then we go to theta and theta is a really strong transitional state. In theta, you're in what it would be considered if we looked at it as compared to something like a hypnotic trance. All right.

LEWIS HOWES: In theta?

SHAWN STEVENSON: In theta. And so this is..

LEWIS HOWES: That's when you're asleep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: This is when you're not asleep. You're, this is a transitional state, very close to sleep. And when you're in a hypnotic trance, like we were just talking about Marissa Peer. I was just talking with her the other day. But we're trying to manipulate that theta frequency to get in there deeper in the brain. And to give a good analogy, like kids up until the age of about seven are spending a lot more time in theta. And so you're very impressionable. This is where, why kids like to believe everything. I'm not going to throw out any names, Santa Claus and anything like that.

I'm not going to say it's not real, like everything is just taken in very deeply. And this is where a lot of our programming takes place. So theta, you're very impressionable. And then from there we transition into Delta. And so this is when we know that we're in sleep. And then within our sleep, there are four primary stages.

We have the big two that people know is non-REM sleep and REM sleep. So REM sleep, that's rapid eye movement sleep. This is when you're getting your dream on. And this is when..

LEWIS HOWES: When your eyes literally?

SHAWN STEVENSON: It is freaky, right? This is just a weird thing. Yeah. So it's rapid eye movement. Your eyes are moving.

LEWIS HOWES: And that's the best type of sleep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: No.

LEWIS HOWES: Okay.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I'm not going to say best. It's a part. We need all of them. And this is the point we're going to come to. And so this is when a process, for example, during REM sleep is when you have something called memory consolidation. This is where. Things that you're learning even right now get converted into your short term memory. So it gets filed away and becomes more of a permanent potential thing in your brain. You need sleep in order to remember stuff.

LEWIS HOWES: Really?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. And so there's a study recently and what they did was they had folks to do a memory test. And they had one set of the participants take the test in the morning and then they had them to repeat the test at two hour increments for 12 hours and then they track their results. Then They had another set of study participants. They had them take the test and then they had them just wait all day, get a good night's sleep and then retest in the morning without doing it over and over again. And they performed 20 percent better on the memory test, only testing once and then getting a good night's sleep and repeating, right? We tend to think that we need to keep hammering.

LEWIS HOWES: So we shouldn't do the overnight stay up all night testing and quizzing ourselves. We should be actually. Practice for an hour, get a good night's sleep and hopefully have better results, than pulling all nighters.

SHAWN STEVENSON: The thing is, we've been in the situation where we're pulling all nighter because we don't know anything.

LEWIS HOWES: We don't know nothing. We gotta study the whole book.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So yeah, man, but that's non, that's REM sleep. And then we have non REM sleep. This is, it's considered more of the anabolic deep sleep. This is where a lot of the antibiotic hormones like HGH get secreted, right? And it's also known as the youth hormone. So kids have a lot of HGH up until around 18 to 20 we have a big sharp decline in our HGH production.

LEWIS HOWES: How do we get more of that?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Sleep. You produce the greatest amount of HGH because we secrete it during the day. All of our hormones are based on the time of day. And this is another really important point is that we're lined up with nature's clock, but we just don't realize it because humans have the unique ability. We can cut ourselves off from it. We could shut all the blinds and we could just create an eternal daytime in this room if we wanted to, but all of our hormones are getting released in a cyclical pattern and human growth hormones are great. A greatest secretion or seat of the HGH happens during sleep. And specifically during that first stage of sleep, when we go for the first time into deep delta. non REM sleep.

LEWIS HOWES: That's when we're producing HGH. We're creating more of it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: The biggest secretion happens then.

LEWIS HOWES: Okay.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. And so if you're not getting optimal sleep, you're missing out on this powerful vital hormone. And whenever I would hear HGH, when I first started doing this research, getting close to a decade ago, I would think of Barry Bonds and like Jason G.

LEWIS HOWES: I don't be wire. Yeah. Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: A rod. No disrespect. Disrespect Marion Jones. But it's because of eight ESPN, just seeing the highlights in the news. But human growth hormone is something that we produce, within our own bodies. You know what I'm saying?

LEWIS HOWES: So how do we produce more of it? It's only through sleep?

SHAWN STEVENSON: No. We could with exercise, especially resistance drivers of anabolic growth. So resistance training, but more so like power lifts. You can get really good ..

LEWIS HOWES: Power lifting will produce help produce more HGH.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah And so..

LEWIS HOWES: What does HGH do for you when you have?

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's what I was going to go to so the benefit of HGH It's not that what we tend to think is that it makes you perform better. Specifically makes you bigger, right? That's what we would think. If you see the transformation of somebody like Barry Bonds, his body, it's not that it just makes you bigger and you can hit the baseball faster. They already have these skills. It's the recovery. It helps you recover a lot faster. My son, my eight year old son can get out and run, do sprints with us like crazy where we're just demolished the next day and he's totally fine. Doesn't feel a thing.

LEWIS HOWES: He's just producing HGH. He's got sleep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: He's healing. He's healing. So it helps with healing. It does help with. Protein synthesis and also retention of muscle mass. So this is huge. This is something we tend to lose as we get older is our muscle mass. And I think it's really important for us to understand when we're talking about body composition, weight loss, fat loss, all that stuff. Muscle is your body's fat burning machinery, really. That's on your brain.

LEWIS HOWES: You have more of it if you want to burn fat.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Because even as we're sitting, we're not training right now. But depending on the amount of muscle mass that we carry on our bodies has a huge impact on how many calories we're burning. Just sitting here. You know our resting metabolic rate. So HGH helps you to retain that muscle that you're out there working hard to build You know. So those are just a few of the things

LEWIS HOWES: so what are the main lifts that you would say?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh, man, i'll tell you straight up deadlift Is like it's money in the bank for producing HGH.

LEWIS HOWES: You're talking like heavy or is this just if you're doing It's 70 80 percent.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Even 80 percent is pretty good, but we're talking like getting up there close to your max.

LEWIS HOWES: Really?.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, absolutely. And that's it for a lot of people. It's that might be a little bit of fear comes up. I don't want to lift that heavy. I'll tell you right now for my PR, I've been in this field for almost 20 years. All right. And what I've seen, people don't get hurt deadlifting, people getting hurt, picking up a feather. They're getting her picking up a pillow.

LEWIS HOWES: Why is that?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Just because our bodies are so conditioned to sitting and not performing and we're not doing the things that kids do that keep them healthy, right? One of those things..

LEWIS HOWES: Like jumping on a, jumping on the couch or just running around or just picking up stuff.

SHAWN STEVENSON: When do we do that?

LEWIS HOWES: We do it as a kid.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And then something happens and we're just like, our environment starts to say, stop playing. Yeah. Stop playing so much. . Especially from where I'm from. It's like leaving that something we say, you play too much. Wow.

LEWIS HOWES: That's so true, man. You play too much. But it's, you should play a lot. You should play a lot.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know what it does. And this is the thing, this is why both of us love sports. Yeah. It's a dimension of that. That's still socially acceptable. But we love it. You learn boundaries. You learn how to communicate in different ways besides just vocally. You learn how to move your body in space and like things like proprioception. This is the awareness of your body in space. You improve your proprioception, your neuroception. All these different aspects of our bodies interacting with our environment and also our internal environment. And if we're not playing, we're missing out on this vital part of our development.

LEWIS HOWES: Yeah. What are the best ways we can play, you think, as adults?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh, man.

LEWIS HOWES: Is it sports, or is it just go out and throw a football, or play frisbee, or What are the activities you think are best?

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's such a great question, man. I've been, this is so funny. I've been thinking about this like the last two weeks. I have, so I, I didn't realize I was doing this because I have, my two sons live with me. I have three kids. My daughter's oldest, my two sons that live in my house. And we just have a culture of we're dancing every day. I don't know why we just do it. We're playing every day. Just the other night, my sons, we had, we sat down and ate dinners together and then afterwards they were fighting for 20 minutes, but it was like, they're play fighting.

LEWIS HOWES: Sure.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But and there's with you being a parent after a while, she's would you shut up, stop, like we start getting irritated. You played too much. But then I catch myself like they're just having a good time. They're learning how to have those boundaries, how to play with each other, how to move in space, how to grab somebody and not hurt them versus hurt them. You know what I mean? And they're playing, they're having a good time. And I'm, the thing is, I'm the one who usually initiates it. I just want to do it for a couple of kids, and so that's one of the things is if you have children play with your kids.

LEWIS HOWES: What's that mean play? Wrestle?

SHAWN STEVENSON: One, a great exercises. And what I used to do with my son, we, we just moved out to LA so I don't know the landscape as much. But I would take my son to the park and then I would just follow him and do whatever he does.

LEWIS HOWES: Whatever he wants to do. Just run around.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Going through the tunnels. Climbing stuff. I follow you. He's the boss. Simon says. You know what I mean?

LEWIS HOWES: I like that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So that's one thing.

LEWIS HOWES: Okay. By the way, your wife has some some of the best home cooking I've ever had is with your wife. At your place. It's amazing. I can't remember what it was specifically, but it was some like, Casserole type of thing.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh, the casserole.

LEWIS HOWES: Yeah. So good, man.

SHAWN STEVENSON: The buffalo casserole.

LEWIS HOWES: Oh, man. It was amazing.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And then she made cookies. And I know we were both like, so done.

LEWIS HOWES: And throw a cookie at her.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You can always eat those cookies.

LEWIS HOWES: Can always eat those cookies. That's my downfall. Sugar. Yeah. How bad is sugar for sleep?

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's such a great question, man.

LEWIS HOWES: Because that's the only, I want to say it's the only, but it's one of the negatives about me is that I eat too much sugar and then I'll go off of it for 60 days. I'm like stream.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

LEWIS HOWES: I'm all in on a bag of cookies. I can't just do one or I'll do nothing for a long time.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But I think that deprivation can lead to the rebound behavior.

LEWIS HOWES: Probably because I'm just like, no, I need it. Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. It's well, so here's the thing. There was an incredible study that was done and there's, it's difficult to do human studies when it comes to addiction because of the implications, right? But there was a fantastic study done using rodents, using mice. And

what they allowed the mice to do was have free access to either cocaine or sugar. And they picked sugar 96 percent of the time. The cocaine is not enough, right? They were so addicted to the sugar and they took..

LEWIS HOWES: Sugar probably tastes better too, right?

SHAWN STEVENSON: They took rats that were already even addicted to cocaine and they quickly progressed and shifted over to an addiction to sugar.

LEWIS HOWES: Wow.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's that strong. And like we humans, we are hardwired. If we're just looking at our biology, we are hardwired through evolution to crave and to enjoy sweet things. For our biology is the implication that there's a lot of dense carbo, dense calories there. It's a dense calorie source.

LEWIS HOWES: It's not a calorie rich. It's not like a healthy calories.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Not necessarily, but even the sugar we'd be exposed to through our evolution would be something like the biggest gift we'd run into maybe with some honey. But today we have everything 24 seven. It's a whole, we're not wired up for this exposure. That's the thing.

LEWIS HOWES: Honey was probably like a nice. It was probably so strong and then you just put a little bit on to add, not like you dump the whole thing, right? Like a winning to play or something. It's just I can drink a whole jar of honey. Yeah. I wanted to.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I was so addicted to Honey Nut Cheerios. That was, that little B man, it was like my bestie man, but even when I met my wife and I was like shifting, like I changed my health and I'd been working as a personal trainer for a year and a half, but that was my thing. I was like eating organic, whatever, but I had my honey nut Cheerios, it was my midnight snack. But then here's the thing..

LEWIS HOWES: This is amazing.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Afterwards, the milk.

LEWIS HOWES: Oh my gosh. It's so good. I haven't had cereal in a long time.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh yeah.

LEWIS HOWES: That was one of the things that was the hardest for me to let go of, but that's something I eliminated essentially from my diet and I just replaced it with cookies or something.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, man, it's crazy, dude. The culture again, that's the big thing, but just on that point of how does this affect our sleep? I think it's a really great question. And the first thing to understand is the impact that sugar has on various hormones. If we're thinking about cortisol for example, or, stress response. And basically what happens is when we eat a high concentration of sugar, We get this hit and it feels good. We like, we get like a serotonin. And this is why some carbohydrates, like if we are select selectively getting our carbohydrates, it can be a good thing. But it's just when we go too far and we go we have a hypoglycemic response. And so we get a blood sugar spike and then a blood sugar crash. And that for us, that's emergency to our biology. Because when your blood sugar goes too low, You have reduced brain function and your body, if we're talking about survival in the conditions that we evolved in, you're not sharp.

LEWIS HOWES: You're tired.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Exactly. And you can be more of a victim, right? And or pray. And so what happens is you get a response from your sympathetic nervous system and your cortisol levels norepinephrine, adrenaline, all those things start to spike to lift your blood sugar back up again.

LEWIS HOWES: So you're not vulnerable.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Exactly. Exactly. Exactly. So that you're just sharp and ready and okay and prepared.

LEWIS HOWES: So you're just, your body's just going up and down all day as opposed to a steady and maybe a spike when you eat a little bit and then steady and right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Or if we're talking close in proximity to sleep, that's going to really mess your sleep up.

LEWIS HOWES: So when, there's all these different people that talk about intermittent fasting or when you should stop eating by, what does the research say about eating before sleep? Anything, whether it's healthy, a snack dark chocolate wine, I don't care what it is. Is

there a time limit you should stop eating by before sleep? And is there certain foods you can eat before sleep that are actually benefit or not?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. This is a good question. I've been looking into this for quite some time now. So let's address both of these things. Let's address. Wine. Let's address alcohol and let's address food. All right. So when it, with alcohol, so what we do know is that alcohol does in fact help you to fall asleep faster. This is a fact across the board.

LEWIS HOWES: Yeah. It relaxes you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's a sedative, and that's all good. The issue, however, is that we experience something with alcohol in your system and how your body metabolizes alcohol. It's called a rim rebound effect, right? Rim rebound effect. And so what happens is we go into when we, earlier we talked about those sleep stages. Basically you are unconscious, but your sleep stages are fragmented and broken. And so we'll go into a deep sleep.

LEWIS HOWES: What's the main, what are the stages again of sleep?

SHAWN STEVENSON: So we're transitioning as we go from waking state to sleep, we go from beta, alpha, theta, delta. But within our sleep, we have these four stages. So we have non REM sleep, and some transitional stages. And so some of these stages when we're actually asleep and unconscious get broken. And so our REM sleep is suppressed. And remember REM sleep is where a lot of memory processing takes place.

LEWIS HOWES: So if you're drinking a lot at night, you'll have less memory is that what I'm hearing?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Do you know anybody who is drunk before they went to sleep and not remember what happened?

LEWIS HOWES: Lots of people.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Yeah.

LEWIS HOWES: Wow.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Because of the sleep.

LEWIS HOWES: So it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter that you got sleep. It's the quality of your sleep that matters.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yes. Yeah. And you can literally forget what happened? This whole..

LEWIS HOWES: So many people say that I don't remember a thing.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Yeah. It's because their REM sleep is damaged, but then there's a big rebound effect with the REM sleep towards the end of the sleep cycle. If we, if somebody is getting eight hours of sleep on alcohol, and so again, but this is not to say you can't drink. It's just, I would recommend give yourself a little bit of a curfew with alcohol of a couple hours, if you can. If you plan on getting to bed at midnight, maybe just stop drinking around 10, give your body metabolizes alcohol relatively quickly for most folks and you can accelerate and support the process by having some more water.

LEWIS HOWES: Is there a thing as having too much water before sleep?

SHAWN STEVENSON: If peeing is a problem, yeah, like so many, people come into my clinic and they're just like, I keep getting up in the middle of the night. They don't drink water all day, then they guzzle it before they go to bed. But there are, obviously there are some situations when folks have issues with, their bladder and things like that. But for most folks..

LEWIS HOWES: You're drinking water before bed and you're waking up once, even once messes up your sleep is what I'm hearing.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I mean it can, but I don't want to make a psychological big deal out of it because it's okay. There's even research now and it's come out recently just in the last couple of years about humans having, basically two phases of sleep, there's some evidence

LEWIS HOWES: ..For a moment and then go back.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So what would happen if we're talking, a thousand years ago, let's go back even further. 10, 000 years ago when folks are, you're living in tribes, you got a hut going, right? So you go to sleep, but first of all, we would go to sleep earlier because when it gets dark.

LEWIS HOWES: Seven o'clock at night,.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Safety. You're not out and about on the tundra. You know what I'm saying? Where the lion can see you, but you can't see it.

LEWIS HOWES: You're at a cave.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. This is, and even if you think about sleep, cause again, like I've been just processing this stuff for the last few years. If it wasn't as valuable as it is, we would have evolved out of it a long time ago. Just if you think about how vulnerable you are, it's just so much magic happens. It's when you're sleeping that we just can't get anywhere else. And so anyways, we would go to sleep when the sun goes down and wake up maybe. So just say somebody goes to sleep at nine o'clock, they sleep until maybe one, you get up, maybe have a little snack, maybe have sex, maybe, if you got fire, maybe you write or read by fire. But today's phone, right? If we get a midnight snack. Beaming light coming out of the refrigerator.

LEWIS HOWES: Crazy, right? And we're grabbing a bathroom.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But then you go back to sleep and you'd have time to get another, three four hours of sleep in addition to that So it's what I'm trying to say is it's not a problem that we wake up at night And I've seen so many people get just very just psychologically troubled messed up. You know that I wake up at night. It's okay. It's okay. We have to relax into it understand that things happen to our bodies. But for some folks, it is chronic. It's a chronic issue. And it usually has to do with what's happening with their hormones. And if we did a hormone panel, we'd see that a lot of times we call them clinically tired and wired where even though they're physiologically tired, their body's wired at night, the cortisol is spiking way too early in the evening because your cortisol is actually supposed to elevate first thing in the morning, like between, like when the sun comes up, that's how we were hardwired.

Cortisol is not a bad thing. And I, that's another thing I want to make clear today. None of our hormones are bad. We wouldn't have them, but it just gets all of the bad press now. But cortisol helps your thyroid to work. Your thyroid is regulating your metabolism. You want to burn fat, you need cortisol. All right. It's not a bad guy. It's just, if it's producing the wrong times or the wrong amounts, it could be a little bit of a problem. I think of it like Hulk, in the Avengers, it was like. He's got a role, he might smash some stuff on accident. Cause he's like giving too much responsibility. You know what I mean? So yeah. So if we're looking at alcohol. Just to go back on that..

LEWIS HOWES: two hours before don't be accessible with it. Yeah. I'm assuming, yeah. Don't get drunk.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. If you're getting, if you're getting drunk, you better believe..

LEWIS HOWES: Like you're screwed. It doesn't matter how much time you got.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. The hangover is a result of the sleep damage. That's really the big thing.

LEWIS HOWES: Really? So if you get a great sleep, you shouldn't have a hangover.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Yeah.

LEWIS HOWES: But it's hard to have great sleep if you're drunk.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. You can forget, you forget about it, but also, and I know that a lot of people experience this, that you can handle it more when you're younger.

LEWIS HOWES: Yeah. But it's still, you're not going to remember things.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. I'm not saying that part. And also we're accelerating our aging when we do stuff like that. Sleep deprivation. I don't know if you talked with her, but I was talking with Alyssa Apple and so her coauthor of the telomere effect, they Dr. Elizabeth Blackburn, she won the Nobel prize for the discovery of telomerase. And so telomeres, you need them to be a longer for you to have a longer life. Telomerase is an enzyme that can add length back onto your telomeres, essentially reversing the aging process. Essentially, it's very complicated, but just as an essential, but what's shortened your telomeres faster than anything apparently is sleep deprivation.

LEWIS HOWES: So if you're pulling allnighters, you're doing four hours of sleep only, and you think that's cool, it's not cool.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's not cool. You're accelerating the time that you're going to kick on. You're gonna die quicker. Diabetes, heart disease, can, we used to see this stuff in folks who you describe as quote in the elderly population, arthritis. Then it started to happening. Generations younger and younger. Now we even have children who are getting adult onset diabetes. We had to change the name to a type two diabetes. Because it's no longer just adults getting it. And so just to make that clear, and I know this from experience because this happened to me. I had basically arthritis of the spine when I was 20, right? In track practice in St. Louis at, I was doing a 200 meter time trial and I broke my hip from running because my body, I was, I accelerated the aging process so much because of the way I was living my life.

LEWIS HOWES: You weren't sleeping well?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Nothing was well, but a big part of me is for me is what are you making your body out of? Which we know we get into and talk about another time, if you're not giving your body the raw materials to build your house, your physical house, it's just going to do a patchwork job.

LEWIS HOWES: I don't remember you saying that you broke your hip in practice.

SHAWN STEVENSON: At track practice. No, no trauma. Nobody hit me. 200 meter time trial broke my hip.

LEWIS HOWES: Man, Bo Jackson up in here.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Dude, I ran a 4540 when I was 15. Wow. You know what I mean? Everything was looking great, but just.

LEWIS HOWES: What were you doing?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Man, I was made out of true story. I was made out of probably 5 percent Emo's pizza.

LEWIS HOWES: Oh my gosh. It's so good though. Clayton, Missouri, man. Emo's pizza, it's so good.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Like I, I barely ate, I didn't eat a salad until I was in my twenties.

LEWIS HOWES: Like I didn't eat salad until about five years ago to my thirties, man.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. But you were sneaking other stuff in though.

LEWIS HOWES: I was doing veggies. I was doing other stuff, but yeah, I didn't eat a salad because I was a picky. I'm still picky. SOB right now, but it's every year I evolve more and I try new things, but I figured out a way to make a salad tastes great. Cause I never liked the dressings. They always smelled bad for me, but sweet green. Have you been a sweet green yet?

SHAWN STEVENSON: I don't think so.

LEWIS HOWES: It's amazing. There's gotta be one by you. Sweet green. It's like a, just to build your own salad. So it's like I can throw some chicken in there or I can throw something else, but it's got a dressing. I found one dressing that I like. It's this cashew spicy cashew and that made the difference for me. So I'm just like fill up all the veggies in there and just a tiny bit of cashew dressing and it's I'm good. And I try to eat that almost every day.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Ooh. So now we know your secret, man. So it's the cashew, spicy cashew dressing.

LEWIS HOWES: Not too much. Cause I don't want to be drizzled with calories and all that stuff. It's just a little bit.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And what's in the salad?

LEWIS HOWES: I, so I put I put Romaine and. arugula and romaine or baby spinach. It makes up that three combination. Usually just do two of them. Sometimes I do kale, but it's a little too hard for me now. So I do arugula and baby spinach usually in the romaine. And then I put carrots, onions, sometimes squash, cauliflower, broccoli sometimes sweet potato based on what I'm doing. Then I'll put, yeah, then I'll put chicken. And and a little bit of cashew sauce and that's it, man. It's amazing.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Congratulations. You were adulting so hard.

LEWIS HOWES: Adulting, right? But it's like, those are the only ingredients that I'll put in, but it's the same thing over and over.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You're winning on a whole different level. So I just, and I've been talking about this a lot recently, but I've been studying the brain for a new project I've been doing. And yeah. A recent study, this was done at Chicago's Rush University, and they compiled all this data. They had thousands and thousands of study participants, and they found that test participants who were consuming two servings. Of green leafy vegetables a day had brains that were 11 years younger than the rest of the study participants who weren't getting that much in.

LEWIS HOWES: Wow.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Crazy, right?

LEWIS HOWES: So leafy greens every day two servings.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, and this was done on elderly folks and so you can keep your brain 11 years younger By getting in two servings. Two servings a day. Got a quick break coming up. We'll be right back.

Do you know what beverage is most associated with having a longer lifespan? Well, a meta-analysis of 40 studies published in the European Journal of Epidemiology revealed that regularly drinking coffee was associated with a lower risk of death from cardiovascular disease, certain types of cancer, and all cause of mortality. Now, keep in mind this is a notable association, but the research is adjusted for a variety of confounding factors like age, obesity, alcohol consumption, smoking, and so on. And still found that drinking coffee stood out as a strong element of longevity. One of the potential elements in coffee's connection with longevity was uncovered by scientists at Stanford University. They recently deduced that compounds in coffee are able to defend the body against age related inflammation.

And the research revealed that light to moderate coffee drinkers live longer and more healthfully thanks in part to the protection of these compounds that suppress genes related to inflammation. There's something special about coffee. Now, of course, coffee has been turned into Franken coffee today. There is coffee out there. That is representing itself as coffee. That is something totally different. All of the different newly invented chemical additives, sweeteners, the pesticides and herbicides and rodenticides, all these different things that are finding their way in the average cup of coffee are anti health.

So yes, we can leverage the benefits of coffee, but we want to make sure that it is organic. And to take the nutrition up a few hundred notches, getting organic coffee combined with the power of science backed medicinal mushrooms. Like lion's mane, for example. Researchers at the University of Malaya have found that lion's mane is able to stimulate neurogenesis in the brain and protect against degenerative conditions. In another recent study found that lion's mane is able to help the brain to be more resilient against stress and anxiety. There's only one coffee that utilizes organic coffee plus dual extracted medicinal mushrooms like lion's mane, like cordyceps, like chaga. And that is the amazing folks at Four Sigmatic.

Go to foursigmatic.com/model right now and you're going to get 10 percent off all of their amazing coffee blends. And if you happen to not be a fan of coffee, they've got their amazing medicinal mushrooms again, dual extracted science backed medicinal mushrooms in amazing tea blends as well. So you can head over there, check them out. They got something for everybody. I've been utilizing foursigmatic for a long time. For literally seven, eight years. Now I love them so much. Head over there, check them out foursigmatic.com/model. It's F O U R S I G M a T I C . com/model. And now back to the show.

LEWIS HOWES: Let's get back to the what should we eat before sleep, if anything? And when should we finish eating before we go to sleep? Perfect. Perfect. So we talked about alcohol. Yep. Yep. Don't have too much, don't get drunk, but you can have some wine if you want to a couple hours before.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

LEWIS HOWES: Don't drink too much water because if you're going to wake up all the time, that's not good either.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Yeah.

LEWIS HOWES: So what about food?

SHAWN STEVENSON: So with food, there's contradicting information out there on this, and some of the best data shows that having a little bit of carbohydrates for your evening meal for your dinner. So I'm not saying eat a chocodile and then go to bed. I'm saying like, if you have dinner at seven, eight o'clock, having a little whack of carbohydrates, it helps to produce serotonin.

LEWIS HOWES: What are the best carbohydrates? Like sweet potato?

SHAWN STEVENSON: You just mentioned it. Sweet potato. Vegetables are carbohydrate dominant foods, some, a little bit denser, so we could say sweet potatoes. There's quinoa, and when we get into these things, everybody's different. Okay, we could do a whole show talking about this. There's like saponins in, the quinoa that might be trouble for some people. Could be white rice, brown rice. It could be, a little pasta. It depends on the person. There's different kinds of pasta now. You know what I'm saying?

LEWIS HOWES: There's the cauliflower pasta.

SHAWN STEVENSON: They make pasta out of everything, zucchini pasta. Zucchini pasta. I think I saw there's some coffee pasta. I don't know, man. I'm just kidding. That would be crazy though.

LEWIS HOWES: Okay, so you can have a little bit of carbohydrates for your meal.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Fruit is another, obviously, carbo dominant category of foods.

LEWIS HOWES: So what would that do for you?

SHAWN STEVENSON: It causes a boost in serotonin when we have a little bit of carbohydrates. And so I know the big, there's a big keto movement, which again, it's a wonderful framework. I use all these different frameworks in my nutrition practice as a consultant and as a nutritionist for, again, almost 20 years now I've been in this field, but it, and I would base it on what the person needed. And it's always dependent on you and where you are right now, which might change.

And so when we're getting in conversation about keto, you can even have a a certain percentage of carbohydrates on the keto. You might even just reserve those for your evening meal. Really? And so beans could be another one, depending on your digestion, how the beans are prepared. And so with that said, so serotonin, here's what's so cool about it. Serotonin is a precursor to making melatonin, right? So your body produces this kind of glorified sleep hormone, but man, when we talked earlier about how our bodies lined up with nature and how our body is secreting hormones on a pattern or cycles. Melatonin is arguably the biggest controller of your body's metabolic or circadian rhythm. Your circadian clock that's determining when you're producing all your hormones. Melatonin is not just about sleep. It's about regulating your whole body.

LEWIS HOWES: That's why there's so many. Supplements coming out melatonin supplements that are doing so well, right?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, but you gotta be careful like that's straight up hormone therapy, it's such a big regulator controller and just talking with the bosses in space, you know talking with dr. Oz and dr. Michael Bruce and all these guys and with having these conversations. We've seen clearly that Folks that get dependent taking too high of a dose or taking melatonin too frequently.

The, and here's what we thought. It was just a hypothesis. We thought that like some other type of taking exogenous testosterone, it might reduce your body's production. It doesn't reduce your body's production of melatonin, which we got to come back to where this is happening. But what it does is it, Depresses or shuts down your body's receptor sites for melatonin. So you still make it, but your cells receptor sites can't receive it, engage and receive it, and turn on the sleep related processes and everything else. Problem, right? The great thing is that we do have access to these supplements, which is wonderful. I'm a big fan of using them in micro doses and or even more so for me would be in spot cases. Just use them temporarily.

LEWIS HOWES: I'm deficient of something. B12 or whatever. It's take this for a few months until you feel like you're caught up to speed.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Our sleep is so important with so many things. And so if you just need to get on track, but we just don't want to create a dependency. I love it for travel. If you're changing time zones, you want to get back on schedule. If you've had a couple of rough nights of sleep, maybe it's work or whatever. That's a great spot. So melatonin has its place, but just to go back to where this is produced and why even taking a supplement you still continue to produce is that, and this is crazy because in my conventional university class, I was taught that your pineal gland produces melatonin. That's it. We now know today that there's 400 times more melatonin in your gut, in your belly than in your brain. All right. So this microbiome, all the science and all of this discussion happening now, it really is the final frontier when we're talking about health. It's the interface between the outside world and us, it's like what we're taking and putting in our bodies.

That's the most intimate experience in the world and what's happening in your microbiome determine what becomes you and what is waste, so that's a whole other conversation, but I just want people to know that we have to take care of our gut health. And we'll come back, we'll talk about that another time, but so melatonin is tied to all these things, but with serotonin, with getting that little hit of carbohydrates can be helpful for producing serotonin and melatonin in the evening.

Now there was a study that was conducted and they found that when folks who were overweight ate close to bedtime, they had a greater secretion of cortisol. All right. So uppers of like over 50 percent greater cortisol secretion, all of us, by the way, produce a little bit of cortisol when we eat a meal because it's a big, like all hands on deck experience because again, you're taking stuff from the outside world and putting it in you, your body got to make sure that you're safe.

LEWIS HOWES: It's got to simulate it. It's got to, So check it all, make sure it doesn't throw it up or yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Everything, like it's so much that happens. But if you're the folks who are overweight in this study who consumed right before bed had like over 50 percent higher secretion of cortisol. And the problem with that is that cortisol is like the antithesis or has an inverse relationship with melatonin. So if cortisol is high, melatonin gets,..

LEWIS HOWES: So you're not sleeping well if you're eating right before bed.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But if you're overweight, obese, there's a higher propensity. And this is why there is some efficacy behind a statement of don't eat before bed. I don't like that statement as a blanket statement across the board. I don't. However, I do like to look into the research it's saying, so just to be a little bit more mindful of that. But the problem is number one, if you want to have something. Yeah. That's, it's more stressful trying not to have a snack if you want a snack, but also part of the reason we might want to have a snack, at 12 o'clock at night is because we're up, Netflix and chilling.

LEWIS HOWES: You should be asleep buddy. You should be asleep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So that's part of it. It's just the our practices and our culture around food and us not getting the nutrition we need, but it's just, it's our culture around food. And so it goes back to you need to be sleeping. A sleepy brain is a hungry brain.

LEWIS HOWES: Really?

SHAWN STEVENSON: A sleepy brain is a hungry brain.

LEWIS HOWES: So if you're tired, you're hungry?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Absolutely. I call it Tungry.

LEWIS HOWES: Yeah. Hangry and hungry.

SHAWN STEVENSON: That just happened. Yes.

LEWIS HOWES: An angry brain is a hungry brain too.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Absolutely. Absolutely.

LEWIS HOWES: So why is that? Why is a sleepy brain hungry for food?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Oh man, this is so crazy. Listen to this. So there was a study that was conducted and it was crazy and what happens with the brain and your nutrition and glucose reaching the brain when you're sleepy. So across the board, even though we can use ketones for processes in the brain. We all know this, but there are certain parts of your brain that can only run on glucose.

And so what the studies found, what the study found was that when folks were sleep deprived just one night, all right, so one night of total sleep deprivation was used in a study. So that's basically if we stayed up for 24 hours from now until the same time tomorrow. They found that there was a 14, I'm sorry, a 12 percent reduction in glucose reaching the brain. All right. So this is literally. Your brain is starting to starve. And what happens when that happens, when we go back to that evolutionary perspective, it's danger, right? All hands on deck, cortisol response, adrenaline response. It is a dangerous situation. And they found specifically 14 percent of that carbohydrate reduction or glucose reduction reaching your brain cells was from the prefrontal cortex.

So that's the most human part of your brain responsible for executive function, social control, distinguishing between right and wrong. So your ability to even choose whether or not to eat a food is dramatically reduced, because your brain is like starving. If you've ever had ice cream, if you've ever had cookies, if you've ever had a candy bar, your brain knows hardwiring, I can get a dense source of glucose to shoot it back to my brain because I need it. And so that's when we get into a battle of our biology versus our willpower. Your willpower is going to lose out eventually.

LEWIS HOWES: It's true.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Even for the toughest among us, you know what I'm saying? But why stack conditions against yourself? And we do that when we're sleep deprived. And so that's what I want people to know is that it's not a lot of times these things aren't necessarily your fault when you're trying to battle it out and not eat a food. It's because our brains are usually a tire brain is a hungry brain.

LEWIS HOWES: So what would you say is your is the optimal evening routine or the one that you do?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, that's a great question, man. Great question. It's evolved. You know what I mean? And that's what I want people to take away, too, is that. You can change. There's so much cool stuff that we can do today. You got meditation, you got journaling, you got, tai chi. You know what I'm saying? There's all this stuff you could do. Playing board games. Is that cool? Have you played the heads up?

LEWIS HOWES: No. Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So you've got all these cool things you could do to hang out with your friends. Spend some time with your significant other. How do we fit it all in? You don't have to

do everything or you can do each thing in a micro way. But so for me, my current evening routine is number one, just the hallmark thing for me is getting myself some tech free time before I go to bed, before I lay my head down at least 30 minutes, we all can do this. And Harvard researchers have confirmed, I talked about this and I pushed this into culture like the last five years hard. So people have heard this, where it came from. All right. I've been really working to get this out here and this week we've got them right here, man. We've got the new iPhone. It's got three cameras.

LEWIS HOWES: Sick.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's fun to play.

LEWIS HOWES: It's amazing.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But this device is the greatest deterrent for our sleep quality today. And so Harvard research has confirmed that the light exposure, blue light specifically and white light that's that kind of shoot out from our devices that we can't really see if we're sitting here and they're wet, this light around us is ambient light. But if you're in a dark room and you see that phone it's like emanating like this bluish alien light, right? And so what they found was that this light does in fact suppress your melatonin secretion and dramatically increases cortisol. And they got numbers on this. So what they found is that approximately every hour you're on your device at night, you suppress melatonin for 30 minutes, right?

Every hour you're on your device, you suppress melatonin for 30 minutes. So if you're on your device three hours, melatonin suppressed for 90 minutes. And so again, even though you might be unconscious and go to bed, And you're not aware anymore. You're not going through your sleep cycles efficiently. So that's what it's really about is optimizing our sleep cycles. And we do that with the way we live our lives. And so just to go back on that point with me, just 30 minutes, at least no, at least ideally we want to see more like 60 minutes, if possible. Yeah. Then we're like, we get into that place of what do I do though?

LEWIS HOWES: You read a book, you hang out with your friends, you go to bed.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Some people just aren't trying to hear that, man. You know what I mean?

LEWIS HOWES: So that's no phone and no TV? Yeah. So no, you can't watch your show, your movie.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Here's a couple of hacks and a lot, I'm sure a lot of people know this. You've got the blue light blocking glasses, you've got blue light blocking apps for your phone. Like it's built into the iPhone now. And folks who have Android, they have a night shift. I'm sorry. What is it called? Twilight.

LEWIS HOWES: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Is another thing. I believe that's what it's called.

LEWIS HOWES: Okay. So there's some things you can do.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. So there's things that you can do to reduce that experience. And for many folks, and I know myself included, I definitely do feel like sometimes even it's a neuro association, just putting the glasses on, excuse me, I would get sleepy. You know what I'm saying? Yeah. Just by putting the glasses on.

You're like, okay. Chilling out. Yeah. Or we can also, dim the lights around us, maybe even change some bulbs, a couple of bulbs in your house, candlelight, that's sexy. You know what I'm saying? So you just change. And then we evolve with those kinds of lights in the evening, those tones, right? These kinds of warmer colors. And so that's what I do. I give myself a 30 minute curfew and I really love. To just take some time, hang out with my wife, we'll talk, I'll do some reading. This is when I, but we've, again, like we've got, it's a light dimmer, lights a little bit dimmer.

I'll do at least probably 10 minutes of reading, 20 minutes sometimes if we're not spending some time together. You know what I mean? So we have that. And then for me, I love if I get a chance to do a magnesium bath in the evening. So this is a big one, man. So magnesium has been found to be responsible for over 650 biochemical processes in the body. Many of them related to relaxation and sleep. All right. So magnesium is needed to like contraction and relaxation of your muscles. So the relaxation response of your muscles, like if somebody is cramping, that kind of thing, magnesium helps a lot. Okay. But also it relaxes your nervous system. So you, it helps to shift over from your.

Sympathetic fight or flight nervous system. Magnesium helps to shift you into the parasympathetic rest and digest part of your nervous system. And so people have been doing this for centuries. Like Epsom salt baths has helped to improve sleep and relax sore muscles, help you to heal faster, all that stuff. It has some credence. Now we got some like supercharged magnesium salts.

LEWIS HOWES: Really? So you do this almost every night?

SHAWN STEVENSON: No, a couple of times a week, you know what I'm saying? But even once a week can be good. What I have also, I have the topical magnesium spray, so I use that almost every night. So I'll just like massage, rub that in. And that's another thing that you could do to get a massage, right? If you can or sleep from your significant other or self massage. There's even acupuncture points. And I talk about this and sleep smarter because I'm very analytical and how I think I'm like, You could touch a point and but there is some evidence that this, they did this in a clinic, I'm sorry, in a hospital. And so what they did was manipulate this acupuncture point and they saw higher levels of melatonin metabolites in their urine by manipulating this pressure point. So it's doing something with melatonin. But with massage, you produce endorphins, serotonin. So this all helps with that relaxation response. I don't know anybody that's ever gotten a massage and got numbers. Like I'm so ready to fight now. You know what I mean?

LEWIS HOWES: Like I just want to chill for a few hours.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, that's it, man. Okay. So if I can. My wife, like I'll massage her feet or if she wants to massage my feet, that's so great, man, by the way, or I got like a little tennis ball and I'll just put that on the floor and rub that around on my feet, bottom of my feet. So there's another couple of things. And so some of these things are not as consistent things for me is screen curfew, reading time with my wife and magnesium. Those are my things.

LEWIS HOWES: And no food at a certain time, probably.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. I don't even think about it because I'm nourished and I don't have a hungry brain. Yeah. So if I eat, we finished eating at, seven or eight, whatever it is I feel good. I don't need to jam any food before bed. But the other thing I do as I'm walking into the bedroom is I turn the thermostat down.

LEWIS HOWES: Make it cold.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. And we've talked about this before.

LEWIS HOWES: Yes. 69.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

LEWIS HOWES: That's why I keep it at, man, every night.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yep.

LEWIS HOWES: So good.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's, it is, and this is, goes back to that evolutionary process, evolutionary biology. We have a natural drop in our core body temperature at night, one to two degrees. And what the theory is, because again, like a lot of stuff we don't know specifically why, but is that our body uses a lot of energy to try to keep us, keep our temperature up. So by bringing that down a little bit more energy is being dispersed to do things like memory consolidation detoxification of your brain via the glymphatic system. There's like a changing of the guard that happens in your gut microbiome. Like all this energy is needed to bring you back better. Yeah. And so if your environment is too hot, no matter where you live on the planet, whether if it's like Chile or it's antarctica. Yeah. It gets that might not be a good example, but during the daytime and during the nighttime, the temperature is different.

The temperature goes down a little bit at night, no matter where you are. And so if you artificially keep it high, your body's going to be trying to fight to bring itself down. So help it a little bit. Today we do have access a lot of us to regulate our thermostat. Yeah. At least, like during this time of year here in LA, like you can get down, fifties and sixties, like you can just open a window, and yeah, so that's what I do. I turn the thermostat down or turn the heat off if it's been on.

LEWIS HOWES: Sure. Sure.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

LEWIS HOWES: Amazing. So that's your evening routine. What else do we need to know about sleep? We've talked about sleep sanctuaries and making sure you have. The snake plants and all these other things, do you still do the snake plant?

SHAWN STEVENSON: I have not gotten, we just moved. So I haven't gotten my whole thing optimized, except like we got some blackout curtains because when you came to my house, like we were out in the woods.

LEWIS HOWES: It was dark.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You don't need blackout. You got, it was like, maybe a little moonlight, but that's our bodies. We evolved with that. That's a natural spectrum of light. And the Lux is

so much. less than what's beaming out of your telephone or the sun. But now, we're like in a neighborhood. So I've got some blackout curtains again. But something else that I would, I think people would be interested in is still the buy in. Like, why does this matter? Why should I be looking at optimizing myself for 2020? Like this is a new decade. This could be the best decade of your life.

But it's also with all these opportunities and work harder mentality and be more productive. You're going to get less sleep, less quality sleep. If you have that mentality as well, right? If you're like so many opportunities, it's a new decade. Let's crush the decade. That type of thinking could make you hurt, hurtful in sleep, right?

When you say crush, I immediately thought of Gary V. Of course. And he's like the guy everybody seems like, he's, he's out there just dominating. His thing now that he's out talking about, he gets seven hours of sleep a night. I talked with him maybe four years ago. We're having dinner and this is when, this is beard Gary V. I don't know. He did his little moment of beard. And and I was just like inquiring Hey man, so what's with your health practices? Like you're trying to play the long game. You're talking about buying the jets. How are you going to do that?

LEWIS HOWES: Yeah. If you're dead.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. If you're dead. D E A D. Dead. Exactly. So what he was like, he's hired a trainer to travel with him because he like, he knows himself to keep him accountable on that end and he gets his sleep despite what people think. And so just keep that in mind, the people that you're looking at and the people that even the ones that are saying, sleep is for suckers. I promise they're sleeping. I promise you can't operate or, and also they might not be sleeping enough and they're not reaching their full potential. You know what I mean? So be very careful about that because what you want to do, you don't want to just execute. You want to be the very best version of yourself to get up and execute. You can accomplish so much more when you feel well.

LEWIS HOWES: I think I saw Steve Harvey talk about he's mentioned something he said. I think he said sleep. Sleep is for those who are broke or something like that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

LEWIS HOWES: Did you see this?

SHAWN STEVENSON: I know what you're talking about. Yeah.

LEWIS HOWES: I think he said something like ..

SHAWN STEVENSON: That was Steve. It might've been him.

LEWIS HOWES: He said this recently, I saw a video that came up about a month ago. He's sleep is for broke people or something like that, where it's you got to work harder than people if you want to make money. You've got to spend extra hours and things like that. But..

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, again, like I know a lot of these people who have these messages and Even, another really good friend of mine and yours too, Eric Thomas, right? He's another person, out there, but what he, and he's shared this,

LEWIS HOWES: he's I wake up at 4am or 5am.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But he goes to sleep early. Like we've been hanging out for a long time.

LEWIS HOWES: Sleep at 8pm, right?

SHAWN STEVENSON: He's knocked out. All right. But he's getting up and grinding, right? He's getting, when he's up, he's trouble. So his thing is sleep, get enough sleep, but don't sleep in, don't oversleep. Don't be lazy. Yeah. That's the difference. It's not, don't sleep. That's killing yourself and that's you're not showing up as the best you as we gone through today.

LEWIS HOWES: Is there too much sleep?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Absolutely. Yeah, we can and I know that many of us have experienced this where we maybe we sleep longer than normal and we're tired. I'm super tired. When we get up and like tired for a while and a big part of that is just even how we're interrupting our sleep cycles, but that's a really unique conversation.

LEWIS HOWES: What is the optimal amount of hours for most people who live busy lives, who are pushing the envelope on work, family activities? They're doing a lot of things. They're trying to fill it all in their plate, achieve their goals and do everything. What would be the optimal amount of hours of sleep for those types of people?

SHAWN STEVENSON: I'll tell you right now that eight hours isn't enough. It's not enough for some people, right? For some people, it's six. For some people, it's seven. For some people, it's nine. It depends, man. It's the answer that nobody wants to hear because you always so called

experts are like giving people these cookie cutter answers like you need to get eight hours of sleep.

I think that's wildly negligent to tell people that because you can become neurotic about something that you don't even really need. What it really boils down to, if you're getting eight hours of shitty sleep, for me, I liken sleep minutes to calories. Like today, most people are well aware that it's not just the quantity of calories, it's the quality of those calories for same thing. It's the quality of those sleep minutes, not just the quantity, right? So you can get if you're looking at what did I mention earlier? A chocodile, right? Versus wild caught salmon or, Lewis's salad. Is there a name of the salad?

LEWIS HOWES: I should call it the great salad or something. Because it's a custom bowl. Greatness bowl.

SHAWN STEVENSON: The salad of greatness. So chocodile versus the salad of greatness, it's going to have wildly different impact on what it does to your metabolism. And so the same thing with your sleep minutes, you can be getting like eight hours of chocodile sleep because of your blue light exposure, because of you not.

Tapping into thermal regulation because you having issues with blood sugar regulation and listing goes on and on. Some of the things we talked about. Or you can get an incredible optimized version of that sleep that only takes you six and a half hours where you're going through your sleep cycles efficiently and you're waking up feeling like a beast, right? The answer is it depends. It's the quality of your sleep and who you are and what you're doing right now. Because there are times in your life when you know you've had to sleep more, right? If you're like somebody who's training for whatever, your body just needs a little bit more sleep, maybe you're under a lot of stress, whatever the case might be. It's going to change.

Then we have to honor our bodies. Obviously I'm a big fan of routine because your body's always looking for routine. But when you're up, life is dynamic, like things are going to happen. And so I allow myself. To change my sleep schedule a little bit and I try to stay within a nice framework But if something's going on and I know that I'm stressed like man, I like I really need to back off I need to recover. I don't need to push it down more and this also just comes with experience, too Sure, so that I can wake up recovered and get back on my grind and so but just a little quick thing that I want to share with people. That's like another big buy in point. Is that our sleep quality affects our appearance?

Specifically, our, everybody, nobody's waking up you know what? I just want to be super ugly today as possible. You know what I mean? I want to scare children. You know what I mean? And there was this really cool study that was done recently. So this was just in 2017. And the sweetest researchers and what they did was they had study participants take a picture after a full night of good sleep and then they had them take a picture after sleep depriving them where they're getting about five hours, five, six hours of sleep for two days.

All right. So they sleep deprive them for two days. Take their picture again. There's a mixture of pictures that. These raiders, the people who are rating all the people's beauty and what they did was they looked at all the different pictures and this is looking at what's happening in our brains just again through evolutionary biology.

When we see people, we get feedback and what they, what the scientists were wanting to do was to find out the sleep deprivation cause a hesitance to want to be around somebody. All right. And so what the Raiders found was that when people were sleep deprived, they were deemed to be less attractive. They were deemed to be less healthy. And they also decided I would be less interested in socializing with this person. Okay.

LEWIS HOWES: Wow.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Just in two days of sleep deprivation and another study by Swedish researchers found that just five days of sleep deprivation, just getting less than six hours of sleep led to 45 percent increase in fine lines and wrinkles in the face. It aged you very quickly, but the good news is it reverses not as quickly.

LEWIS HOWES: It rebounds.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

LEWIS HOWES: Wow.

SHAWN STEVENSON: It's called beauty sleep. Why don't we talk about this more, it's called beauty sleep for a reason. There's real rejuvenative magic in this, and so looking at how we feel about other people and how we're showing up in the world, like your sleep has a big impact on that.

LEWIS HOWES: And tell people about sleep debt. You mentioned this before. If you've gone 25 years of just horrible sleep. Can you oversleep for 20 years?

SHAWN STEVENSON: 25 years. That's a long time.

LEWIS HOWES: A few years, five years, 10 years. If you've been bad in your twenties and you've been partying late nights and you're a promoter and you get horrible sleep every night, can you rebound and put more sleep in that bank debt and recover?

SHAWN STEVENSON: And the way that we think about sleep debt, it doesn't work like that. The good news is, again, this kind of goes back to the conversation about telomeres. Once we change our habits and our practices. You can do things to start to reverse that aging process in some aspects, right? By lengthening those telomeres, by doing good things for your body, which includes getting more sleep. So you burning the candle at both ends of burning the telomeres at both ends, you can reverse that process. That's the good news. That's good. Now, in the context of sleep debt, so if you're accumulating, if you're just sleep deprived for, just say you're going like months at a time, getting, for whatever hours your incidence of heart disease is skyrocketing, heart attack, stroke, diabetes, all this stuff is going up.

Chances are you're not going to make it very far. Some people that even people listening I'm fine. Gotta be careful about that. Now that sleep debt is a lot to pay back. If it's like a day or two, maybe three, four days. most. And you catch up, maybe on the weekend that can be helpful, but it's still you're not getting back as much as you're taking out if that makes sense. So the best strategy is to get high quality for the key words, high quality sleep more consistently. And then if something happens where it throws you off you go out, whatever, they could got an event for a couple of days, all good. But guess what? You're going to probably be pretty destroyed and you're going to want to sleep more every course.

LEWIS HOWES: Yeah, of course.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But if you're constantly dipping into that bank account, you can't readily pay it back as much as we think.

LEWIS HOWES: Got it, man, dude, this is awesome stuff. Let's share the the three truths. Cause I don't know if people probably didn't hear you four years ago, all my new audience members. I don't even know if I asked you this last time, maybe. So imagine it's your last day on earth many years from now and you've created everything you want to create. You've done all the research, the books, the podcast, whatever it is, you've done it all.

But for whatever reason, you got to take all of your work with you to the next world, heaven, wherever you go. But you get to leave behind a piece of paper and you can write down three

things, to be true about your whole life experience of all the lessons and truths that you know that you'd want to share behind. What would you say are your three truths?

SHAWN: What was coming up for me, the first thing is that this might sound a little straight, love wins. That's what's coming up for me. Love wins. For me over these years, man, I really believe that our relationships are the most impactful thing on our health, on our success in life, on our ability to, problem solve and to just be happy, our happiness quotient. It's our relationships. Sleep is amazing, but our relationships affect our sleep. You know what I'm saying? So I think it's just a huge governing force and love wins, and finding ways to not try to win, but to love more, so that would be one. I hope that makes sense.

LEWIS HOWES: Love wins.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Number two would be, wow, this is tough, man is self care, make sure that you're taking care of yourself so that you can show up as the best version of yourself for the people that need you. There's a big culture today of, pushing yourself to the limit, sacrificing this word sacrifice, sacrifice yourself so that you can do good for the people that you're trying to help or, even do good for the world. But the word sacrifice is from a root meaning to make sacred, right?

And so if we're making sacred the craft of taking care of oneself so that can be the best version of myself, I don't really see it as a sacrifice. If I'm getting to bed early, if I'm skipping out on the party a little bit early. It's not a sacrifice. It's a sacred practice for me so that I can be the best me possible. Make sure that you're focusing on self care as you move into the future. Yeah, so that would be number two. And Number three would be to laugh as much as possible and have fun, you know. Be with people who make you laugh. Cultivate humor. I came from a place where there was a lot of You It was crazy, man.

People from where I'm from, you can have, post traumatic stress syndrome. You don't even realize it, the sirens, the gunshots the violence. When you go outside, you don't know what's going to happen. You know what I'm saying? It can be a nice day. Everybody's out playing, shooting, shooting hoops on the crate.

You know what I mean? Or, it can be a drive by, and you got drug dealer right next door. And, those are my idols, and coming from that environment. And I think part of the reason that we made it out of those circumstances and did it Gr somewhat gracefully is that we had laughter, we still had laughter in our household.

Yeah. And even though like even, my, my family members that weren't necessarily the best role models, we still had laughter and just being able to play, have fun. And so I think it's super important. And also just as we move into this next decade, I think that laughter, humor.

Smiling, kindness. These are going to be the things that really helped to bring us together. We got enough stuff bringing us apart, but if we stopped taking ourselves so seriously and understand that we are just a cell in this incredible body that we call earth. And our job is to be a light, and to, we have the ability to light up any room we go. Yeah. Go into, and I've just literally yesterday ran an experiment and it's like the holiday season around this time and I was just smiling at people, whether it's in the store, just people driving by on the parking lot, boom. Smiles nine times outta 10, people smile back. It's a responsive, reflexive thing. And we, and then they can carry that on to the next person. That's it, man. I love that. That's it for me.

LEWIS HOWES: I love that. So instead of saying you play too much, don't play too much, say, you don't play enough, right?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yes. Keep playing.

LEWIS HOWES: Keep playing. Why are you playing?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Keep playing. Keep playing.

LEWIS HOWES: I like that. Awesome, man. I acknowledge you, brother. I appreciate your wisdom. I appreciate all the research that you spent so much time on to give us this. Clarity and peace of mind because these are scary topics and ideas that there's so much noise out there and we don't know what's true and what's not true and we don't know what to do. There's usually too many options, too many things to try. So thank you for creating clarity, creating the research and the foundation for us to have routines and simplifying all this mess. So I acknowledge you brother.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Thank you, man. I receive that man.

LEWIS HOWES: Of course. Okay. Final question. What's your definition of greatness?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Ah, my definition of greatness. Ah, man. I was just, I'm sorry, man, I was thinking about my wife. I. Coming from where I come from and, I went to the other extreme. I just started to give myself my time, my energy to everybody else. And I lost myself and I was trying to find like enlightenment and, it's doing all this meditation and I was brought this

concept of non attachment and I believe that a lot of my suffering was a result of my attachment to, my kids, my wife and, my family members, all the people that I wanted to serve.

And I get the concept because without as much attachment, you experience less suffering. I decided to consciously attach myself to my wife. I it's not a, it's not a ignorant love and attachment. It's a chosen, decisive, intentional attachment. And so for me, greatness is loving somebody more than anything else you can imagine. I love her so much. I would, of course, like many of us feel like, we're jumping from a bus for somebody, but I more so than give my life for her, I want to live for her. Wow. So that's how I feel. That's what greatness is to me. It's being able to live fully and completely for somebody.

LEWIS HOWES: Shawn Stevenson. Thanks, brother. Beautiful, man. Appreciate that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Thank you so much for tuning in to this episode today. I hope that you got a lot of value out of this. If sleep wellness is something that is important to you, and something that you want to share the education on, Please share this out with somebody that you care about. Share this out with a friend, a family member. It cannot be stated enough that sharing is truly caring. And when we're working on something ourselves and we want to improve a certain aspect of our lives, if sleep is something that you want to put a priority on yourself. It's always so much easier and more graceful when we have other people that are supportive of us, that are on the same page with us, that are aspiring towards the same thing.

So that's another reason to share these incredible episodes out with friends and family members. You never know. What's going to make that difference? What's going to be that change maker? What's going to be that thing that sparks an entirely new reality for folks. So I appreciate you so much for being a part of this mission. We've got some epic masterclasses and world class guests coming your way very soon. So make sure to stay tuned. Take care, have an amazing day, and I'll talk with you soon. And for more after the show, make sure to head over to themodelhealthshow.com. That's where you can find all of the show notes, you can find transcriptions, videos for each episode, and if you got a comment, you can leave me a comment there as well. And please make sure to head over to iTunes and leave us a rating to let everybody know that the show is awesome, and I appreciate that so much. And take care, I promise to keep giving you more powerful, empowering, great content to help you transform your life. Thanks for tuning in.